

From the Director

Chatham University recently announced an academic restructuring which will include the creation of a School of Health Sciences. I am very excited to also announce that I have accepted the inaugural Dean’s position for the School of Health Sciences effective July 1, 2014. With these new changes, Chatham sets in motion the transformation that will create a stronger student experience, new faculty opportunities, and closer collaboration between Chatham’s graduate and undergraduate programs. As part of this process, I am very happy to also announce that Dr. Joe Schreiber will be promoted to Director of Physical Therapy. Congratulations to Joe!

The 2013-14 academic year has been an exciting and busy one for students and faculty alike. During the 2014 APTA Combined Sections Meeting, the Neurology Section honored Dr. Sue Perry for her service to the section, and Dr. Joe Schreiber was re-elected to a second term as president of the Pediatric Section. Closer to home, Dr. Steve Gough organized a panel discussion on the Affordable Care Act, which included among others, the Honorable Mike Doyle, U.S. Representative from Pennsylvania. In addition, one of our service learning projects Safety for Seniors, received the “Fred Roger’s Good Neighbor Award” presented by the United Way of Allegheny County. This is the second time that students in our service learning program have received this prestigious award. A special thanks to Dr’s Perry and Traister for their role in this service-learning project.

We have new and exciting opportunities coming to fruition on several fronts. The program is in the early stages of planning a student-run Pro-bono PT clinic, which will supervised by faculty and alumni. We plan to form an advisory committee to help us create a clinic that will provide PT services for our Eastside neighbors. Please let us know if you are interested in helping us plan this exciting endeavor. We also have an interdisciplinary group of occupational and physical therapy students and faculty traveling to Ibarra, Ecuador to work together in the CRECER clinic. The clinic treats some adults but mostly children. Hopefully this will become an annual trip for the program.

Lastly, after 13 years of dedicated service to our program, Dr. Judy Traister retired at the end of April. Under her leadership, the clinical education program has grown in size and excellence. She has been instrumental in mentoring many PT students over her career both in the clinic and at Chatham. She will be greatly missed by all.

This alumni newsletter has more details about these and other events, so please read on! If you have news that you would like to share with our Chatham PT community, please send the items my way (downey@chatham.edu). We love to stay in touch with all of you!

My best to you all….  

Pat Downey

PT Fund Grows Thanks to Leadership Donors

As some of you may know, Fen Hsu Lin, DPT ‘05 graciously donated $2,500 in 2005 to start a fund for the physical therapy program at Chatham. The fund grew slowly until this year when we contacted 22 alumni who jump-started the fund by becoming “Leadership Donors.” Thanks to their generosity, and donations ranging from $100-$2,000, the fund is now endowed at over $28,000. This fund will help to support educational and leadership opportunities for current students such as providing support to attend the National Student Conclave.

We are now hoping that the rest of the Chatham PT alumni will generously donate in order to help us reach our goal of $100,000. You may make a donation to PT fund by either visiting https://www.chatham.edu/giving/gift/?fund=pt or sending a check made out to Chatham University PT Fund to Chatham University, c/o Dr. Pat Downey, Woodland Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15221.

A very special thank you to the following Leadership Donors for their support during this past year. Thank you so very much for supporting our students!

Christopher Brehm, MPT ’99, TDPT ’08
Suzanne Wagner Cavanaugh, MPT ’97, TDPT ’08
Ryan Christoff, MPT ’96
Ann Dennison, TDPT ’05
Jonathan DiLauri, MPT ’99
Nancy Foley, MPT ’96, TDPT ’08
Michael Fronzek, MPT ’02, TDPT ’02
Paula Glasser, TDPT ’05
Steven T. Gough, TDPT ’04
George Hess, MPT ’02, TDPT ’02
Diane Holmes, MPT ’02

* PT faculty ** past program director (2000-03)
Dr. Joe Schreiber re-elected as President of the APTA Section on Pediatrics

In November, Dr. Joe Schreiber was elected to a second term as President of the Section on Pediatrics. Dr. Schreiber has served in a variety of leadership positions in the Section since 2005, including as a Regional Director and as chair of the Education Committee. This second term as President will end in 2017.

Dr. Schreiber began his career as a physical therapist in Erie, Pennsylvania in May of 1986, just after graduating from the University of Pittsburgh. His first job in pediatrics was at Shriner’s Hospital in Erie. Since that time he has worked in a variety of pediatric settings including the Western PA School for Blind Children, Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, and The Children’s Therapy Center in McMurray, PA. Dr. Schreiber has been at Chatham since 2001 where he has enjoyed the challenge of teaching students about pediatrics while also having the opportunity to continue clinical work and to work on a variety of interesting research projects aimed mostly toward assisting clinicians in using research evidence to guide practice decisions.

Dr. Ann Williamson becomes Director of Clinical Education

As of May 1, Dr. Ann Williamson has taken over as Chatham’s Director of Clinical Education (DCE). Previously, she was co-director with Dr. Judy Traister, who recently retired. Ann brings a strong clinical and academic background to this position and we are very fortunate to have her on faculty.

Dr. Williamson graduated from Chatham College with a masters and doctoral degree in physical therapy in 2003. She began her PT career as a generalist at UPMC-St Margaret’s where she worked on the inpatient acute and rehabilitation units, as well as in the outpatient clinic. Additionally, she worked at the National Rehabilitation Hospital in Washington, DC for two years specializing in the treatment of adult and adolescent neurological patients. Dr. Williamson also has clinical experience in the home care setting. She maintains clinical practice at St. Margaret’s on a casual basis.

Dr. Williamson’s academic career began in 2006 as a problem-based learning facilitator and lab instructor. Over the past nine years, she has become increasingly involved in the curriculum, teaching in more than a third of the courses in our program. As part of clinical coordination, she has become an active member of the Three Rivers Academic Consortium and strives to enhance relationships with our clinical partners.

Dr. Judith Traister Retires

On April 30, 2014, Dr. Judy Traister retired from Chatham University as Director of Clinical Education. She had worked in the much-loved physical therapy profession for forty-five years. Dr. Traister started her career at The Mercy Hospital of Pittsburgh where she spent fourteen years gaining experience in acute care, rehabilitation, burn trauma, and outpatient therapy. She then joined Martin, McGough, and Eddy, which later became Allegheny Chesapeake PT, where she served as a director of physical therapy in skilled nursing facilities, outpatient offices, a podiatry hospital, and she also worked as a floater for a total of eighteen years.

In 2001, she joined the faculty of Chatham College’s physical therapy program. In this position Dr. Traister has guided students through the clinical education portion of the curriculum as well as teaching in some clinical and Principles of Practice Courses. Dr. Traister reduced her appointment to part-time in 2010 but has continued to be an active participant on the faculty. In 2009, for her many years of service at the local level in the Southwest District of the Pennsylvania Physical Therapy Association and in the American Physical Therapy Association’s House of Delegates, she received the Service Award from the Pennsylvania Physical Therapy Association.

As Dr. Traister reflects on her years in the field of physical therapy, she expresses much gratitude to all of her patients, colleagues, students, and other co-workers who have contributed to such a great career and wonderful life experiences. She would also like to thank the physical therapy program/faculty of Chatham University for giving her incredible opportunities, support, and friendship over the last fourteen years. Dr. Traister will continue her work with Surgicorps International, which involves surgical mission trips to developing countries. The faculty and staff at Chatham will miss Judy’s vast experience and great wisdom – not to mention her excellent fashion sense!
Recent Faculty Scholarship

PUBLICATIONS

Dr. Melissa Bednarek and colleagues: The effects of a single event Interprofessional Education (IPE) experience on occupational therapy students’ attitudes toward IPE. The Internet Journal of Allied Health Sciences and Practice. Jan 2014; 12(1).

Dr. Steve Karas and colleague: A randomized trial to compare the effect of general seated thoracic supine manipulation and targeted supine thoracic manipulation on cervical spine range of motion and pain. Journal of Manual and Manipulative Therapy. 2014; 2(2).


PRESENTATIONS

Dr. Steve Karas and Dr. Angie Westerheide, DPT ’12: Results of a Knowledge Translation Program on the Frequency of Thoracic Spine Manipulation and Mobilization for Patients with Neck Pain. AAOMPT, 2013.

Dr. Melissa Bednarek and colleagues: “Interprofessional Education: Facilitators, Barriers & the Faculty Team”. Educational Session at Pennsylvania Occupational Therapy Association Conference. Pittsburgh, PA November 2013.


AWARDS/HONORS

Dr. Pat Downey was promoted to Full Professor during the 2013-14 academic year and Dean of the new School of Health Sciences in July, 2014.

Dr. Steve Karas and Dr. Angela Westerheide, DPT’12 were awarded first place for their platform presentation at the Fall 2013 meeting AAOMPT.

Dr. Susan Perry received the “Service to the Section Award” from the Neurology Section of the APTA

Dr. Joe Schreiber was re-elected as President of the Section on Pediatrics for a second 3-year term

Dr. Sue Perry honored by the Neurology Section

At the 2014 Combined Sections Meeting of the APTA, the Neurology Section honored Dr. Susan Perry with the “Service to the Section Award.” The purpose of the award is to acknowledge and honor a member of the Neurology Section whose contributions to the Section have been of exceptional value. Dr. Perry has served on a variety of committees, planning teams and advisory groups for the past 17 years, including the elected position of Vice President 2006-2012. Chatham’s PT program is very proud of the work she does for the profession.

Members of the Class of 2014 (Jeff Homer, Jen Mullen, Ashley McKinney, Brittany Bauman, Michael Zolotnitsky, Kayla Cominsky and Anne Keller) and Dr. Sue Perry, celebrate her receiving the Neurological Section’s Service Award during the 2014 Combined Sections Meeting.
The DPT Classes of 2014, 2015, and 2016

During the last year and a half the Chatham DPT Class of 2014 has been working hard at improving their skills as physical therapy students. They are excited to be putting these skills into action as they start their second Clinical Education Experiences this spring. While most of the class will be staying in the Pittsburgh area, students will be going as far away as Florida to further their education. Students will be learning in various settings including acute care, skilled nursing, outpatient neurology, outpatient orthopedic, and pediatrics. In August, six members of the Class of 2014, along with representatives of the PT faculty, will be accompanying occupational therapy students and faculty on a trip to Ecuador. The trip provides them with an exciting opportunity to travel, apply their rapidly improving PT skills, and provide valuable service to the community in Ecuador where they will be staying.

Chatham University’s DPT Class of 2015 is composed of 38 bright students hailing from Colorado to New York, with Pennsylvania and Ohio rounding out the majority of the class. Our 28 women and ten men completed their undergraduate educations at small liberal arts schools, such as Washington & Jefferson and Baldwin-Wallace, and large universities, such as the University of Pittsburgh, Ohio University, and Syracuse University. When they aren’t studying, the class of 2015 enjoys going to the gym and exploring the city together. As a whole, the class is excited to take their knowledge from classes (and advice from our mentors) and start their first clinical experience!

In late August of this year, Chatham University will welcome the DPT Class of 2016. We have 40 incoming students with a gender make up of 29 women and 11 men. They represent nine states including Arizona, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Washington. Some of the undergraduate programs represented include Chatham University, Penn State University, University of Pittsburgh, University of Maryland, Washington State University, Brigham Young University, Virginia Polytech, Indiana University of PA, Baldwin Wallace University and Mt. Aloysius, among others. The program looks forward to welcoming this new group of students.
The DPT Class of 2013

The Graduating Class of 2013 presented their final Systematic Review Projects in December just prior to graduation. The projects reflect a yearlong process, which included hours of database searching, analyzing and writing multiple drafts before presenting the finding to their peers, the second year class of students and the faculty. To the right is a list of graduates and their topics.

Class of 2013 following the PT Recognition Ceremony

Class of 2013 and faculty at the annual “Perry Pool Party”

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<td>Elizabeth Calabrese</td>
<td>What is the effectiveness of physical therapy for individuals with mild-moderate carpal tunnel syndrome?</td>
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<td>Stephanie Fitzsimmons</td>
<td>What is the effectiveness of aerobic training versus strength training on gait in older adults?</td>
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<td>Amanda Berstler</td>
<td>What is the effectiveness of physical therapy in the management of joint contractures in older adults?</td>
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<td>Sara DiPietro</td>
<td>What is the effectiveness of conductive education as an intervention approach for children with developmental disabilities?</td>
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<td>What is the effectiveness of physical therapy for individuals who have undergone surgical repair of the rotator cuff?</td>
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<td>Emily Walsh</td>
<td>Physical Therapy for Congestive Heart Failure</td>
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<td>Kristen Budziszewski</td>
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<td>Marie Johnsen</td>
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<td>Breanne Condon</td>
<td>The Effect of Spinal Mobilization on Pain Pressure Threshold: A Review of the Literature</td>
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<td>Casey Nestor</td>
<td>What is the effectiveness of physical therapy for children with idiopathic toe-walking?</td>
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<td>Lauren Wentz</td>
<td>What is the effectiveness of physical therapy for individuals with benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV)?</td>
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<td>Amy Aquila</td>
<td>What is the effectiveness of physical therapy in the management of joint contractures in children and adolescents with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy?</td>
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<td>Janine Goyke</td>
<td>Interventions for improving outcomes in individuals with adhesive capsulitis</td>
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Wexford Healthcare Center Receives the “Award for Institutional Support”

Each year the Doctor of Physical Therapy program acknowledges a facility and its physical therapists for exceptional support in teaching, research, and/or clinical education; going above and beyond expectations as an educational partner. In 2013 we recognized Wexford Healthcare Center, formerly known as Wexford House, with the Award for Institutional Support.

James Gordish, PT, DPT, and clinical instructor attended the Graduate Recognition Ceremony in December of 2013 to receive this award. He was joined by Bonnie White, MS, CCC-SLP, and Director of Rehabilitation at Wexford Healthcare Center.

The physical therapy program appreciates all of the clinical experience opportunities provided for our students locally and across the continental US. Recent honorees include Orthopedic and Sports Physical Therapy Associates (2012) and LifeCare (2011).

Karl Gibson Recognized

Mr. Karl Gibson, PT, MS was honored at the 2013 Doctor of Physical Therapy Recognition Awards Ceremony. Mr. Gibson was selected by the students to receive the 2013 Clinician-Educator award based on his guest lecturing over many years in the area of management and PT governance and advocacy in Principles of Practice: Health Care Delivery, Management and Policy. As an experienced physical therapy manager, students of the Class of 2013 felt that Mr. Gibson was an exemplary professional role model who excelled at bringing the PT practice realities into the confines of the classroom.

Prior to starting a consulting business, Mr. Gibson spent his PT career at UPMC-St. Margaret Hospital where he worked as a therapist, manager, and later as co-founder and CEO of River Valley Rehab Associates. He has served our profession as a Pennsylvania delegate and chief delegate in the APTA’s House of Delegates, and on the PPTA and APTA Board of Directors. He has also served on multiple task forces and committees for the APTA over the years, and was recently appointed Chair of the PPTA Public Policy and Advocacy Committee. Mr. Gibson is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh, where he received a bachelor degree in physical therapy and a master’s degree in orthopedic physical therapy.

Dr. Steve Gough organizes panel discussion on the Affordable Care Act

We were very fortunate last summer to have several guests participate in a panel discussion about the Affordable Care Act. This panel was arranged for the Principles of Practice V Class: Health Care Delivery, Management, and Policy coordinated by Dr. Missy Criss. Dr. Steve Gough, PT, DPT, OCS, who is CEO of Allegheny and Chesapeake Physical Therapy and part-time faculty at Chatham, arranged the panel discussion related to his teaching about reimbursement issues. The Chatham University Physical Therapy Class of 2013 was able to hear about the legislation from the perspectives of legislators, insurance brokers, health plans, and health care systems. Students felt that the differing perspectives were enlightening and allowed them to have insight into this controversial legislation.

From left to right: Vikram Mangalmurti (VP Health Care Reform, Highmark, Inc.), Julie Donohue, PhD (Associate Professor, Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh), the Honorable Mike Doyle (U.S. Representative from Pennsylvania), Dana McQuaide Begley (VP Medical Management and Post Acute Services, Conemaugh Health System), Kris Geary (President, Keystone Benefits Group), and Dr. Steve Gough.
Amy Marley-Kennedy, MPT, DPT ’02

Amy Marley-Kennedy is a 2002 graduate of Chatham’s Masters of Physical Therapy and transitional Doctorate of Physical Therapy. She began her physical therapy career at Saint Peter’s Hospital, New Brunswick, NJ, where her clinical focus centered on acute care, orthopedics and oncology patients. She also became a LANA certified lymphedema therapist.

Four years later, life found Amy in Boston, MA, at Brigham and Women’s Faulkner Hospital where she developed and managed a Lymphedema treatment program and worked closely with Dana Farber Cancer Center. Following her husband’s career, Amy joined the staff as a Senior Therapist at Phelps Memorial Hospital, Sleepy Hollow, NY. At Phelps, Amy was able to embrace her love of aquatic physical therapy, lymphedema and outpatient orthopedics. Additionally, she became an adjunct professor of physical therapy at Dominican College, Orangeburg, NY. Again following her husband’s career, Amy joined the outpatient orthopedic practice for Athletico in Morton Grove, IL. She has geared her clinical focus to treating patients with lymphedema, orthopedic and sports injury, and continues to practice aquatic therapy.

Amy credits her Chatham education and their problem based learning style for giving her the tools to be able to thrive in a world of constant change, both personally and professionally. Amy is passionate about physical therapy and connecting with her patients particularly through humor. Amy currently resides in Evanston, IL with her husband of 11 years, Michael and their rescued greyhound, Archie. In her free time, she indulges her love of photography and travel.

Major Michele Luba, MPT ’99, DPT ’12

Michele Luba earned her Masters of Physical Therapy from Chatham University in 1999 and began working in the field of geriatrics and wound care and concentrated her next seven years of practice in skilled nursing, long term care and independent living. She subsequently added to her practice realm outpatient orthopedics, acute care, inpatient rehabilitation, and home health. Between 2010 and 2012, Michele was an adjunct professor for Chatham’s DPT program and provided PBL facilitation and laboratory assistance for the musculoskeletal, cardiopulmonary and neuromuscular dysfunction courses. In 2012, she received her transitional Doctorate of Physical Therapy from Chatham. Michele is currently employed prn by Allegheny Chesapeake Physical Therapy and RehabCare.

In addition to her civilian therapy career, Michele has served as an officer in the United States Army Reserve Specialist Corps since 2001, and is currently assigned to the 371st Minimal Care Detachment of Twinsburg, Ohio. In 2012, she was promoted to the rank of Major. In 2008-2009, Maj. Luba was mobilized to Ft Sill, Oklahoma, providing orthopedic outpatient and inpatient services to active duty Soldiers. From 2012-2014, she served on active duty as the Medical Readiness Officer for the 316th Support Command (Expeditionary) Surgeon’s Office providing administrative and operational medical support and Army medical systems’ management and training for nearly 9,000 Soldier’s readiness. Maj. Luba was also the Command’s subject matter expert for Line of Duty claims, which provide medical and behavioral health support to Soldiers following a duty related injury or illness. She is currently assisting the United States Army Reserve Legal Command in the adjudication of Line of Duty claims.

Other short term military physical therapy training assignments have included the Pittsburgh VA Hospital, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Ft Sam Houston, TX, as well as providing acute musculoskeletal treatment to soldiers during active duty training periods.

Michele resides in Canonsburg, Pa, with her husband, Mark, six-year-old son, Jacob, and their dog, Guinness. She enjoys volunteering for her church’s Children’s Ministry by providing one-on-one support for children and youth with Special Needs. She also loves gardening, outdoor activities, and spending time with her family and friends.
Jonathan DiLauri, MPT ’99

Jonathan DiLauri earned his Masters in Physical Therapy from Chatham College in 1999 and went on to earn his Personal Training Certification from the National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM CPT) and his Certification as a Golf Fitness Instructor from the Titleist Performance Institute (TPI CGFI). He is one of fewer than 150 treating clinicians in the United States to earn his manual therapy certification as a Certified Mulligan Practitioner (CMP). He recently earned his ACE Fitness Nutrition Specialty Certification to complement his care plans and to better help his patients achieve optimal health.

In 2004, Jonathan opened his own out-patient physical therapy practice and fitness center (www.JointCarePT.com), a comprehensive clinic returning people to health and then transitioning them into independent fitness. That same year, he co-founded Physical Therapy Solutions, lecturing on the east coast as one of only two education companies in the country teaching the orthopedic foundations of exercise to personal trainers. He co-created the “Rehabilitation to Recreation” concept, now used within his physical therapy practice and fitness center. In 2011 he produced and launched www.StopExercising.com in order to promote his DVD on the basic concepts of exercise for injury prevention.

In 2007 Jonathan wrote and published Physical Therapy Musculoskeletal Examination: The Clinicians Reference Manual, a guide for physical therapy students and clinicians to organize and better understand the principles of orthopedic physical therapy patient examination.

Jonathan currently resides in his home town Florham Park, NJ with his wife and two children, daughter Alexa, 2, and son AJ, 6.

“Chatham College truly prepared me to be a problem solver and an entrepreneur both in the office and in creating solutions to problems that we as clinicians deal with every day. Thanks to Chatham and their amazing faculty, I feel empowered to do my part in elevating the quality of the delivery of care in my community.”

Katie Shroyer, MPT ’03, DPT ’04, CBIS

Katie Shroyer earned her Masters in Physical Therapy at Chatham University in 2003 and her transitional Doctorate of Physical Therapy with an emphasis in Pediatrics and Geriatrics at Chatham University in 2004. She started her clinical practice in acute care at UPMC Shadyside Hospital and maintained a casual position with Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh. In 2006, Katie turned her focus to pediatrics and began full time practice in inpatient rehabilitation at The Children’s Institute.

Over the past eight years, Katie has practiced as a pediatric generalist addressing the needs of a wide variety of pediatrics patients/clients. Special areas of interest include treating individuals with brain injury, spinal cord injury, and torticollis. In 2008, Katie became a Certified Brain Injury Specialist and she is now the Squirrel Hill Outpatient Physical Therapy Coordinator for The Children’s Institute.

Katie Shroyer served as a co-investigator in a study titled “Relationship Between Advanced Mobility and Community Integration In Subjects With Acquired Brain Injury” with Dr. Susan Perry and Susan Little, which was recently published in the Journal of Head Trauma and Rehabilitation. In addition, over the past two years, Katie, along with a group of her colleagues, have successfully established a Pediatric Locomotor Training program for children with neurological impairments.

Katie maintains her connection to Chatham’s physical therapy program serving as adjunct faculty and is involved with the pediatric coursework and student observation within the pediatric setting. She lives in the Regent Square area of Pittsburgh with her husband, Jayson, of 10 years and her two children Nolan (5) and MacKenzie (2). In her free time, she enjoys traveling and spending time outdoors with her family.

SAVE THE DATES

Two continuing ed. courses will be offered at Chatham Eastside this fall. Details to follow.

Saturday, October 4, 2014
Orthopedic Symposium: Evidence Based Surgical Intervention & Rehabilitation of Ankle and Hip Pathologies

Saturday, November 22, 2014
Differential Diagnosis for Physical Therapists: A Case Based Approach
(Direct Access 10 contact hours)
Timothy Drevna, PT, DPT ’06, OCS, ATC, CSCS

Tim earned his physical therapy degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1975 and completed his doctoral degree in Physical Therapy from Chatham University in December 2006. Tim entered private practice in 1980, and was co-founder of Drevna-Papson PT Associates in 1981. He re-entered private practice in 2004 after an eight year period of corporate employment, and opened Drevna Physical Therapy Associates.

Tim is an APTA board certified clinical specialist in Orthopedic Physical Therapy, and an APTA certified clinical instructor. He is a member of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) and the National Strength and Conditioning Association. An effective mentor and proponent of private PT practice, Tim serves on the PTPN Board of Directors and the PPTA Practice & Research and Public Policy & Advocacy Committees.

Tim has been a certified Athletic Trainer since 1978, and is also certified as a strength and conditioning specialist. His professional focus is manual therapy of the shoulder, knee, and cervical spine. He has a special interest in athletic injury prevention and sports training program development, especially in concussion management, as well as preventative training for ACL injuries.

Tim resides in Lititz with his wife Sharon. He enjoys biking, traveling, reading, and spending time with his family. A native of Aliquippa, PA, Tim frequently returns to Pittsburgh for family festivities and Steeler games.

Beth Jennings, MPT ’96, NCS

After hearing from a friend about the new physical therapy program opening at Chatham, Beth Jennings applied at the last minute. She was offered an interview at the last session that was being held, and hers was the last name on the list when signing in that day. A few weeks later, that fateful letter came in the mail: “Wait List.” “I felt like I slipped in quietly before the door closed.”

Prior to attending Chatham, Beth received her BS in Exercise Science at Penn State University. Intending to take a break from school, she managed a fitness center for three years before entering the physical therapy program at Chatham. She embraced problem-based learning at Chatham, graduated, and started her career at DT Watson Rehabilitation Center (now HealthSouth Sewickley). After two years with rotations through the inpatient unit, both outpatient departments, the hydrotherapy center, and the transitional care unit, she put in her notice to pursue her primary goal, Travel PT.

“I learned about Travel PT and thought that it would be such a great way to see the country while continuing to develop professionally.” In five years, she travelled to eight states, including Alaska, Hawaii, New Mexico and Maine. During this time she became certified Neurologic Certified Specialist (2001-2011). Yearning for stability and to have a place to call home, she moved to Maine, taking a job at Parkview Adventist Medical Center’s outpatient department as Education Coordinator. There she developed her manual orthopedic skills as well as brought vestibular rehabilitation to the department. During this time she joined three medical mission trips to Mexico where she provided physical therapy and other services.

After making a change and returning to contract and per diem work, the opportunity came up to work in Antarctica. She was the alternate candidate to deploy, but it wasn’t until she assumed the opportunity had passed that she was contacted. “I was packed up and on a plane ten days later. I had no contacts there and was guessing on how to pack for 3-1/2 months on a frozen continent.” She worked at McMurdo Station Medical Hospital, the largest US research station on the continent for the austral summer. She returned again the next year for six months, working per diem when in the US, between two Maine facilities. “McMurdo is a unique place to work, and Antarctica is amazingly beautiful. The PT was the same as anywhere but the mechanisms of injury where sometimes unique and the resources were often limited.”

Beth was recently appointed to the Board of Directors of Operation Resilient Hope, a new non-profit organization for veterans with PTSD and other “hidden wounds of war.” She is continuing her per diem physical therapy work at Mercy Hospital’s MKM ENT Associates – Balance Center where she is able to utilize her vestibular rehabilitation training, and at Parkview Adventist Medical Center, both in Maine, while she looks for her next adventure and/or full time position. Maybe there’s a clinic with an opening on the International Space Station.
Service Learning

During the academic year 2013-14, thirty-seven second-year DPT students participated in service learning projects for a total of 570 hours. The two organizations for which the students donated their time were The Woodlands, a facility on 32 acres in Wexford, PA which serves to enrich the lives of children and adults with disabilities and chronic illnesses, and the Safety for Senior Project of the Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers of Southwestern PA/Family Services.

Volunteering on week-ends and evenings at The Woodlands enabled the students to assist children and young adults with various disabilities/chronic illnesses in recreational activities, crafts, special events such as DIVA night, dances, etc. Through this experience the students not only gave of their time to others but were given the opportunity to learn communication and leadership skills and to increase their ability to work with children and young adults with disabilities and chronic illnesses.

Through the Safety for Seniors Project, students participated in home safety checks for elderly residents throughout Allegheny County. This experience not only gave the students opportunities to relate to the elderly in their homes but through the safety checks, it exposed them to the various living environments of the older population. Not only did the students learn of valuable safety and fall hazards in the home, but this experience also allowed them to better anticipate the needs of patients/clients who may be returning home after physical therapy treatment.

This year the Safety for Seniors group was also honored with the Fred Rogers Good Neighbor Award from the United Way of Allegheny County through its Volunteer Initiatives, specifically Open Your Heart to a Senior Program. They received the award on March 20 at a special recognition ceremony, which was the anniversary of Mr. Roger’s birthday.

Grand Rounds

Chatham University’s Physical Therapy Grand Rounds Series continues every term in the Mellon Board Room on the Shadyside Campus. Refreshments begin at 7:00 a.m. and the presentation runs from 7:30-8:30 a.m. CEU’s are presented to all those clinicians in attendance. Our alumni and clinical instructors are especially welcome.

This past summer’s Grand Rounds began with Kathy Brandfast, PT, MS, who presented a case titled A Patient with Chemotherapy-induced Peripheral Neuropathy. Ms. Brandfast is employed by UPMC where she is the Director of Neurological and Geriatric Outpatient PT Services. The fall Grand Rounds presenter was Dr. Jeannette Kochman who discussed Clinical Decision-Making with a Patient Diagnosed with Hip Pain. Jeannette is an alumnus of Chatham’s transitional DPT program and she works for Lifeline Physical Therapy. Our final Grand Rounds presenter was Chris Venus, PT, NCS who spoke about The Appropriateness of Peroneal Nerve Stimulation to Improve Gait after Stroke. Mr. Venus works at UMPC Mercy and he is the director of the Neurologic Residency Program.

Future Grand Rounds presentations include Julie Skrzat, PT, DPT (PhD candidate) on June 30, 2014 speaking on Progressing a patient through the continuum of acute respiratory failure. In November 2014, Raj Sawhney, PT, DPT, OCS will present Differential Diagnosis in a Patient Presenting with Cervical Pain.

If you would like to be included on the e-mail invitation list, or would be interested in presenting a Grand Rounds Patient Case, please contact Dr. Steve Karas (skaras@chatham.edu).
Fall Prevention: The Otago Exercise Program

Dr. Sue Perry, PT, DPT, NCS

It is well-established that exercise can reduce falls in community-dwelling elders. Exercise program characteristics that are especially effective include: high dosage; supervision; customization; progression in difficulty over time; highly challenging balance activities; and two or more of: strength, balance, flexibility, and endurance exercises. The Otago Exercise Program (OEP) successfully combines these elements and has been found to reduce mortality and falls in the elderly. Further, free resources are available to facilitate its implementation into home-based physical therapy.

The Otago includes a standardized series of flexibility, strength and balance exercises of varying difficulty, to be performed three times/week, and a walking program up to 30 minutes, two times/week. All are prescribed based on ability, and progressed over time. A unique feature of the program is seven physical therapy home visits spread out over the course of 12 months, with telephone follow-up in the months without a visit. In this way, the PT can progress exercises, check on progress and compliance, maintain motivation, and monitor falls.

A recent meta-analysis of seven RCTs demonstrated reduced fall rates (incidence rate ratio = 0.68, 95% CI = 0.56-0.79, P < 0.00001) and risk of death (risk ratio = 0.45, 95% CI = 0.25-0.80, P = 0.0007) at 12 months after initiation. The OEP has the biggest impact on adults over 80 years of age who are community dwelling, who have fallen in the past year, with moderate strength and balance deficits, and who are able to ambulate independently in their home, with or without an assistive device.

The CDC’s Injury Center has entered into cooperative agreements with three states to study the implementation of Otago. The program is included in the CDC’s Compendium of Effective Fall Interventions (www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Falls/compendium.html). A user manual is available at www.acc.co.nz. Finally, an overview that includes reimbursement models is at www.apta.org/APTAMedia/Handouts/PT2012/fallprevent_Renfro_1.pdf.

References


PT and OT Students Travel to Ecuador

This summer six Chatham University PT students will be joining six OT students on a 10-day trip to Ibarra, Ecuador. The PT students include: Allison Evans, Rob Gardner, Rebekah Gilbert, Brittany Lowe, Lauren Stacko and Abby Watson. In addition to the students, Dr. Joe Schreiber, PT faculty member, and Ms. Amy Mattila, OT faculty member, will also be part of the group. The trip was made possible through a relationship that Dr. Joyce Salls, director of Chatham’s OT program, developed with Elaine Keane, an occupational therapist and owner of CRECER, a nonprofit organization providing free therapy services.

Ms. Keane opened the CRECER free clinic in 2013 and it is a center for rehabilitation with a mission of promoting health care services to an underserved region of Ecuador through education, treatment and research. The name ‘CRECER’ (meaning “to grow” in Spanish) stands for Centro de Rehabilitacion, Educacion, Capacitacion, Estudios y Recursos (Center for Rehabilitation, Education, Training, Studies and Resources). The clients will range from children with a variety of diagnoses, to adults who have experienced traumatic brain injury.

This will be the third year that the OT program has sent students and the first year that the PT students will be joining them. We are very excited about sending an interdisciplinary group of students and faculty. This will allow for co-evaluation and treatment of clients between OT/PT students along with the shared cultural experiences between the programs. The last time these two programs shared such an international service trip was 2000 when students and faculty traveled to Hôpital Albert Schweitzer in Des Chapel, Haiti.
Examination of the vertebral artery prior to grade V cervical mobilization: The latest evidence

Fear of injury is often cited as the primary reason that physical therapists do not use grade V mobilization for the cervical spine. While cervical mobilization is not a part of the treatment plan for all patients with neck pain, evidence suggests that there are many patients who will receive substantial improvement once mobilized. A specific concern of many PT’s who chose not to mobilize the cervical spine, is fear of injury to the vertebral artery. Many special tests presented in older textbooks rely on theoretical models of stress to the artery. These tests have mostly been shown to have both low sensitivity and specificity and are no longer being utilized by most PT’s.

The International Federation of Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists, an organization with 20 member countries, implemented a task force in 2007 to make appropriate recommendations. Their consensus work along with references is freely accessible at ifompt.org webpage by selecting the “cervical screen document” link.

A notable change in the recommendations is not to rely on vertebral artery special tests, but rather to be aware of medical conditions such as HTN, cardiac disease, DM, and long term steroid use that may lead to weakening of the vertebral artery. This would require a cardiac systems review to be undertaken for patients that present with relevant medical history. In addition, any possibility of cervical instability due to a systemic disease or injury should be noted. Instability in the cervical spine, particularly the upper cervical spine, can result in increased stress to and weakening of the vertebral artery.

The artery, when healthy, can withstand a variety of forces with no ill consequences. It is those arteries that have been affected by cardiovascular or systemic diseases, or have been stressed through injury, that are vulnerable. A position of significant stress for the vertebral artery is a combination of extension, rotation, and traction. Couple those positions with a high velocity thrust when the artery is damaged, and there is a small chance of serious arterial injury.

A common practice of a “pre-manipulative hold” is also advised before delivering a high velocity thrust to ensure that no symptoms arise that are consistent with arterial pathology. This method suggests that PT’s move their patient’s spine to the end range where the mobilization will be delivered and ask if they have any symptoms. It is important to adequately educate the patient before the hold is performed, since a variety of symptoms (dizziness, facial numbness, headache) can result from stress to the vertebral artery. So we are looking for “any symptoms” not just pain reproduction.

Through a thorough history and consistent screening, the vast majority of potentially dangerous situations can be avoided. The IFOMPT guidelines offer us the best evidence to safely and confidently treat our patients with cervical pain with grade V techniques.

Selected References: